

WENHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting of Tuesday, April 2, 2013 7 pm
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Minutes Approved April 22, 2013

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held on Tuesday, April 2, 2013 at 7 pm in the Selectmen's Meeting Room in Town Hall.

With a quorum present, Ms. Martins called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
Selectmen Present: Molly Martins, Chair; Patrick Wilson, Vice Chair; Ken Whittaker, Secretary
Also Present: Mark Andrews, Interim Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

Abbreviations used:

BOS

FinCom

ATM

Public information:

Agenda

Financial Service Contract

Announcements

Trudy Reid, Town Clerk was present and announced:

- The Annual Election is Thursday April 11, 2013
- The Special State Primary election is April 30, 2013
- Absentee Ballots are available in the Town Clerk's office until noon the day before the elections and would be accepted until 8 pm the day of the election

Mr. Wilson made the following announcements.

- The ATM will be broadcasted on local cable TV: Comcast channel 22 and Verizon channel 37
- The WVIS/Henry's is providing lunch at 12 PM, April 6, 2013 before the Town Meeting in the Bessie Buker School cafeteria. The League of Women Voters (LWV) will be showing a PowerPoint of civil interest during lunch.
- The Wenham Police Department: Expired medication disposal on Saturday April 27th 10 am to 2 pm
- The Government Study Committee is looking for volunteers; letters of interest should be submitted to Town Administrator's office.

New Business

Appointments

Fire Chief / Building Inspector

Vote: Mr. Wilson moved to appoint Robert Blanchard as Fire Chief for the Town of Wenham. Mr. Whittaker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Vote: Mr. Wilson moved to appoint Charlie Brett as Building Inspector for the Town of Wenham. Mr. Whittaker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Provisional Fire Fighters

The BOS considered the recommendation by the Fire Chief to appoint the following people as provisional firefighters for one year pending physicals:

- Michael Allain
- Zachary Ingraham
- David Marsh

Chief Blanchard noted that this brings the number of fire fighters to thirty, which is consistent with the traditional number for staffing the call fire department.

It was noted that David Marsh was a full time fire lieutenant before joining the Wenham Police Force and is fully trained.

VOTE: Mr. Wilson moved to appoint Michael Allain, Zachary Ingraham, and David Marsh as provisional Fire Fighters for one year for the Town of Wenham. Mr. Whittaker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Election Officer

VOTE: Mr. Wilson moved to appoint Patricia Lucy as an Election Officer. Mr. Whittaker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Audit Committee

VOTE: Mr. Wilson moved to appoint Michael Lucy to the Audit Committee. Mr. Whittaker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Special State Primary "Senator in Congress Election" Warrant April 30, 2013 – Vote / Sign

Mr. Whittaker read the Warrant Announcement for the Special State Primary for Senator

VOTE: Mr. Whittaker moved the BOS approve and sign the April 30, 2013 Special State Primary Election Warrant as read. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

State of the Town Report 2012 – 2013

Mr. Whittaker reviewed that he and Mr. Andrews worked on a "State of the Town" report, which summarizes the major accomplishments and significant developments during the year. He went on to suggest this be used as a reference at the next Selectmen's retreat. He offered to create this as an annual report while serving on the BOS.

The department heads were thanked for their contributions to the report.

Carin Kale, League of Women Voters, said the League would show a PowerPoint quiz at the Town Meeting lunch. This is meant to be a fun quiz including local trivia.

Former Finance Director and Wenham resident Sarah Johnson, Great Pond Road, respectfully made observations regarding the ATM Warrant Articles and lack of corresponding Ballot questions for the debt appropriations e.g.

OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) Article for the insertion of \$5,000 in to the Trust

Cemetery Trust Funds Articles

Payment for the Regional Vocational School (Town Meeting action taken November 2009)

Ballot questions for Warrant Articles 7 & 8 (elected to appointed positions)

She also cautioned that the Tax Recap Sheet is not considered part of the budget, questioning if this could be presented to Town Meeting for a vote as part of the budget.

Ms. Johnson's questions/ concerns were addressed by Mr. Andrews who stated that action taken by the Town was fully vetted with Counsel, Finance Advisors, and the Department of Revenue, and he was confident in the process and stood by the budget being presented at Town Meeting.

Ms. Johnson also noted her concern that the Finance Department was without management and leadership, work is backing up, and errors in the tax bills have been reported. She noted the last Request For Quotes, on which she provided comments to Selectman Whittaker, is for limited budget services only through to the end of the Fiscal Year, saying the \$24,999 may not pay for all the necessary financial support. She went on to strongly recommend an in-house Finance Director be sought immediately to staff the Finance Department properly.

Mr. Andrews responded that the billing errors have been resolved and he is working closely with the staff.

License Agreement Cedar Street Sidewalk

Work remains to be done. There was no update.

Request For Quotes (RFQ) Financial Services

Mr. Andrews reported that seven RFQ for Financial Services went out March 22, 2013 with proposals received back April 1, 2013. Three were returned without response, two were unable to fill the request, and one quote was received from Baystate Municipal Accounting Group (BMAG) for \$21,450 for services through the end of the fiscal year to July 31, 2013.

It was noted that much of the budget for financial services under the previous contract, was used during the budget process for January, through March.

Mr. Whittaker responded that he was disappointed with the lack of response to the RFQ and suggested the Town get a better understanding of how to present such a request to find firms with suitable expertise and to determine why firms are not responding. He noted his concern that short-term contracts are not sustainable for the Town.

Ms. Martins and Mr. Wilson agreed that services are needed immediately, and this being the only proposal, the Town has no alternative options to get back on track.

The BOS talked about finding similar models in other towns, have an operational audit of the finance department, and determine how best to go forward.

The BOS agreed to the proposal from BMAG and that BMAG puts in the time needed to get back on track and kept current. Mr. Andrews noted that work such as reconciliations can be done off site and that such off site work is used to benefit the town. He added that Sullivan and Rogers is available as a back up or for additional help to the Town at \$150 per hour.

The BOS directed Mr. Andrews to draft a list of questions of what issues need to be addressed, and why the Town is not getting responses.

Mr. Wilson asked that Mr. Andrews meet as soon as possible with the Finance Department staff and BMAG to discuss and assess where the Finance Department stands, what is in arrears, and when it will be up to date, including an action plan to address issues. It was noted that this is intended as a transparent and open process.

The job descriptions for two part time staff in the Finance Department are being finalized.

VOTE: Mr. Whittaker moved to accept the proposal from Bay State Municipal Group for financial services through the end of FY13 (July 31, 2013) for \$21,450. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Andrews updated the BOS regarding the \$30,000 Community Innovation Challenge Grant Wenham recently received and shared with the Town of Hamilton, and the Hamilton Wenham School District. The three entities recently met with the Collins Center to discuss going forward to get an understanding about how the entities should work together e.g. buildings, grounds, and maintenance to take advantage of the grant.

There is an Open Meeting Law Regional workshop on Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at Gordon College.

The ATM is Saturday, April 6, 2013 at 1 pm at the Bessie Buker School; the BOS will meet at 11 AM.

Executive Session (ES)– Contract Negotiations: Police Union, Police Chief, and Interim Town Administrator

VOTE: Mr. Wilson moved the BOS enter into ES at 7:54 PM, according to Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25 (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; ¶ (3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and to include Interim Police Chief Tom Perkins, and to return to open session for the sole purpose of adjourning. The contracts being discussed were the Police Union, Police Chief, and Interim Town Administrator. Mr. Whittaker seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

The BOS returned to open session at 9:44 pm.

VOTE: Mr. Wilson moved to adjourn at 9:44 pm and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley